COURSE SYLLABUS: MOOT COURT
Spring Semester 2019: Sections 5 & 6
Anita Kay Head
Office 304
E-mail: ahead@law.ua.edu

Class Hours:  Section 5 meets at 9:45 a.m. on Tuesdays & Thursdays in Room A225. Section 6 meets at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesdays & Thursdays in Room A225. Combined Classes: Noted on Class Schedule and Assignments Chart

Required Texts:  *An Advocate Persuades*, Coughlin et al. (1st ed. 2016)  
*The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (20th ed. 2015)

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COURSE OBJECTIVES: By the end of this semester, you should be able to

1.  thoroughly research legal issues;
2.  understand the impact of the procedural posture of a case on legal issues;
3.  write a persuasive analysis of a legal issue that adheres to the conventions of appellate practice;
4.  effectively argue a client’s position orally; and
5.  improve your writing and appellate argument by implementing constructive criticism.

COURSE OVERVIEW: This semester will focus on persuasive writing and oral advocacy. You will prepare an appellate brief in which you will attempt to persuade the court to rule in your client’s favor.

You will also learn to effectively argue your client’s position orally and will demonstrate this skill in a practice argument and a final argument before a mock appellate panel. These arguments are called “practice rounds” and “final rounds.”

ASSIGNMENTS: The assignments indicated in your Class Schedule and Assignments chart are tentative; they may change as the semester progresses. Assignments due "in class" must be ready at the beginning of the indicated class. Assignments turned in after the beginning of class are late.

TWEN: You must register for my class TWEN page and check it regularly. My TWEN page is for students in Sections 5 & 6 only. Do not share any materials posted on our class TWEN page with students in other Legal Writing sections.

GRADING: This course is graded, adhering to the law school’s first-year mean. Your grade will be based primarily on the final draft of the appellate brief. I will deduct points or assess failing grades for failure to attend or participate in class; for failure to submit work on time; for submission of inferior work; for violations of the Honor Code; for violations of formatting requirements; or for failure to attend mandatory research sessions, court-watching sessions, or conferences. You will be notified if you are in danger of failing the
class. You will use your anonymous number instead of your name on most assignments this semester.

**RESEARCH CLASSES:** You must satisfactorily complete all Research assignments to receive credit for Moot Court.

**PROFESSIONALISM:** I expect the same level of professionalism from you that I would expect from a practicing attorney. In the context of this class, professional conduct requires the following:

- **E-mail:** Attorneys must regularly monitor communications from clients, courts, and other attorneys. In this class, you must check your law school e-mail regularly for announcements, assignments, and other information relating to your research and writing classes. Please note that I frequently use email to communicate with my students.

- **Timeliness:** Attorneys must comply with strict deadlines. In this class, due dates and times for both the research and the writing assignments are strict, barring a genuine emergency such as a significant, verifiable illness or a death in the family. If there is a genuine emergency, you must request an extension as soon as you are aware of it. If no extension is granted, I may deduct points for any assignment that is late. I will not comment on or grade any assignment that is turned in more than 24 hours after the deadline.

  In the absence of a genuine emergency, you will lose 10 percent of the total possible points for the final appellate brief if your paper is even one minute late. If you are late submitting any assignment relating to the appellate brief, anonymity may be lost.

  Be sure to back up all work so that you do not lose work if your computer crashes. Do not wait until the morning an assignment is due to print it if a hard copy is required. Likewise, do not wait to ensure that you understand and can access any online system, such as TWEN or SafeAssign, if an electronic copy is required. I will notify you in advance whether an assignment must be submitted in hard copy or electronic form. **Computer problems in the library, with your personal computer, or with these online systems will not excuse a late paper.**

- **Class Attendance:** You should treat this class as you would treat a client meeting or court appearance. You should be present, on time, and prepared. Please notify me if you will be unable to attend any class.

- **Conferences:** Likewise, you should treat any conferences with me as you would treat a meeting with your senior partner. You should be prepared and punctual. You will have one mandatory conference with me this semester. The conference will be held in my office - Room 304. You are primarily responsible for what we will discuss in conference. You should be prepared to discuss any questions you may have, including those raised by my comments. I may also ask you to rewrite
portions of your paper or to complete certain tasks prior to conference. Conferences about your work can be extremely helpful to you but are of little use if you do not come prepared. Similar to the fall semester, you are always welcome to schedule additional conferences.

- **Technology:** I will not allow the use of computers, whether laptops or tablets, during this class.

  This class is interactive, and my goal this year is to teach you a new set of analytical skills that you can apply across varied substantive areas. So it is imperative that you process the information and apply those new skills rather than transcribe substantive information. Notetaking by hand and participating in in-class exercises and discussion will better enable you to learn the core objectives listed above.

  If I use a particularly text-heavy powerpoint slide in class, so that writing all of it by hand is difficult, I often will post that slide on the course TWEN page.

  If you have a phone or other wireless communication device, turn it off before class. You may not record or photograph any portion of the class without my approval.

  Finally, if you have any accommodation concerns regarding this policy, please contact Dean Lee as stated below.

- **Formatting Requirements:** When submitting formal documents, attorneys must comply with strict formatting requirements. In court, these standards are often set out in a judge’s standing order. In this class, you must read and strictly follow the formatting requirements attached to this syllabus in my standing order. Even an inadvertent failure to comply with these requirements may affect your grade significantly.

- **No Collaboration:** Attorneys must adhere to professional and ethical standards. In this class, you may not discuss or work together on any assignment unless your legal writing or research professor is present and you are otherwise instructed.

  Your written work must always be your own. No one other than your legal writing professor may read or edit your work. Although you may be assigned a partner during this semester, you may not discuss the problem, your research, or your brief with your partner or anyone else until after the final brief is turned in to me.

  Copying any portion of another student’s work and handing it in as your own is plagiarism and is a violation of the Honor Code. Similarly, students who divide up research and/or writing assignments are violating the Honor Code. If you witness these activities and do not report them, you are also violating the Honor Code.
You will be required to sign an oath for each research and writing assignment, confirming that you have complied with this policy. You should read the applicable oath before starting each research or writing assignment and ask your professor if you have any questions.

COURT WATCHING: You must observe one hour of an appellate court proceeding this year. You must submit the attached certification to me by April 23, 2019.

ADA POLICY: The Law School is committed to meeting the needs of students with physical, learning, and other disabilities, and provides appropriate accommodations and services tailored to each person’s specific requirements. The Law School’s assistant deans and the University’s Office of Disability Services work together to help individuals with disabilities achieve and maintain individual autonomy. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Grace Lee, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, at 348-7190 or glee@law.ua.edu so that the individual’s needs for support services can be evaluated and accommodated in a timely manner.
All of your assignments for this class must comply with the following formatting requirements:

- You must indent paragraphs at least five spaces.
- You must use Times New Roman typeface and twelve-point type.
- Your left and right margins must be at least 1.25 inches.
- Your top and bottom margins must be at least 1 inch.
- You must number each page at the bottom of the page. The page number may drop below your one-inch bottom margin, but text may not.
- You must double-space lines, except that block quotations must be single-spaced and conform to Bluebook Rule B12.2, and you should single-space your point and subpoint headings.
- You may not alter the standard line height.
- You may not justify your right margin except in a block quote.
- You must number your lines.
- The total number of lines may not exceed the line limit for the assignment.
- You must staple all assignments except the final appellate brief, which must be bound or stapled.
- You must attach a cover sheet to all assignments. For all assignments except the final appellate brief, the cover page should contain the assignment title, your anonymous grading number, the submission date, your professor’s name, and your moot court section (5 or 6). You will receive instructions for the cover sheet of the final appellate brief in class.

If you fail to follow any of these formatting requirements for any reason — intentional or unintentional — you may lose points on the assignment. Your point deduction will depend on the egregiousness of your violation, which I will determine. In addition, if you violate the formatting requirements, you may lose your anonymity and also may be brought before the Honor Council. You are responsible for following all of these formatting requirements regardless of the type of computer software or equipment you use. Formatting requirements are imposed to achieve fairness and to prepare you for law practice.
COURT WATCHING CERTIFICATION
APPELLATE COURT ARGUMENT

To complete this course requirement, you must attend one federal or state appellate court argument. After completing this form, please turn it in to your professor by April 23, 2019.

Please answer these questions about the nature of the proceeding.

1. Was the proceeding in federal or state appellate court?

2. Was the matter civil or criminal?

3. What issue(s) was the appellant or petitioner appealing?

4. What oral argument techniques did the advocates use that were particularly effective?

Which techniques were ineffective?

How do you plan to incorporate what you saw into your own oral argument this semester?

Signature: ________________________________  Date Submitted: ______________

Name: ________________________________

Section: ________________________________

Date Attended: ________________